

On Tuesday, Nation Media Group-Uganda staff bid farewell to veteran journalist Daniel Kalinaki, who has been at the helm of the organisation for nearly three decades. Kalinaki urged young journalists to pursue the profession with passion, curiosity, and purpose.

BY KHALIL IBRAHIM MANZIL

Susan Nsibirwa, the Managing Director of Nation Media Group Uganda, has praised veteran journalist Daniel Kalinaki for his nearly three decades of dedicated service, describing him as a mentor, leader, and compassionate colleague whose impact will resonate long after his departure.

Nsibirwa revealed that when she joined the company, Kalinaki had already considered leaving but agreed to stay on at her request to guide the newsroom through the election period.

"Thank you for investing in journalists, in editors, in teams, and helping many careers grow, we wish you continued influence, not just in Uganda but globally. Your contribution will not be forgotten," she said.

Kalinaki, a respected voice in Ugandan journalism, announced his decision to step away from mainstream media, marking the end of an era at Nation Media Group (NMG). He said he does not see himself returning to the traditional newsroom, opting instead to pursue personal projects, including books and documentaries.

"I don't see myself in a newsroom again, I will find the time to do things that contribute to journalism, whether as an active journalist or supporting the industry through the [Editors] Guild and other initiatives," he said.

Reflecting on his 28-year career, Kalinaki singled out a 2003 investigation as his most significant story, which revealed that the Constitutional Review Commission had not received public petitions advocating for the removal of presidential term limits. The report challenged prevailing narratives and raised critical questions about the legitimacy of subsequent constitutional amendments.

Despite facing police interrogations, detention, and threats, Kalinaki said he holds no regrets, though he expressed disappointment that the story did not achieve the political reform he had hoped for.

"In some ways, we may have gone

backwards constitutionally," he said.

Kalinaki also spoke directly to young journalists, urging them to pursue the profession with passion, curiosity, and purpose.

"Stay hungry, stay foolish, have intellectual curiosity, understand how the world works so that you inform yourself and your audiences from a position of knowledge," he said.

### Professional bond

Ms Aidah Nalubega, the office manager in the Editorial department, spoke of a long-standing personal and professional bond with Kalinaki, back to when she first met him at the age of 19. She described him as not just a colleague, but a close family friend, noting that their relationship has endured both inside and outside the workplace.

"He is quite generous, he often used his own money to support colleagues in times of need, requesting me to increase the salary of so many people, saying 'we don't need the money, they need it', while ours remained constant. This shows how different he is," she said.

Senior Office Manager David Mukwaya echoed similar sentiments, describing Kalinaki as a consistently kind and dependable figure throughout the years.

"From the first time I saw him many years ago as a very young man, he is still the same Daniel today," Mukwaya said, emphasising his humility and character.

He added that during difficult moments, including the loss of staff members, Kalinaki would personally contribute funds to help transport the bodies of deceased colleagues back to their families, an act that underscored his compassion beyond the newsroom.

As he exits the newsroom, Kalinaki remains optimistic about the next generation of journalists.

"I hope younger journalists can create a conversation about the Uganda we want, what kind of society we need, and what are the ingredients to build it," he concluded.

# NMG boss Nsibirwa



Nation Media Group (NMG)-Uganda Managing Director Susan Nsibirwa addresses staff during the farewell party for outgoing Managing Editor, Editorial, Daniel Kalinaki at MPL headquarters in Namuwongo in Kampala, on Tuesday. PHOTOS/LBRAHIM KAVUMA



Mr Kalinaki identifies some of the former staff to NMG-Uganda Managing Editor Allah Chekwech.

## What they say about Daniel Kalinaki, aka DK

**Emmanuel Gyezahor,** Former political reporter, Daily Monitor/ Press and Information Officer, European Union Delegation

What an illustrious career DK has had! From child-rookie to the very top of journalism all the while dedicating his entire professional life to one media house. He had this stubborn tenacity to get it right, and never took 'no' for an answer, to the irritation of many, including yours truly. Godspeed!

**Flora Aduk,** Former Features Editor, Daily Monitor/ Senior Programmes Officer, ACME

"Play hard, Work harder" That phrase comes to mind when I reflect on my years of work with Daniel. It is pretty simple, by all means to enjoy the thrills of life while with the next day, a 7am meeting meant just that, no excuses! And he would be there! I learnt to be on top of my professional game irrespective of my softer interests.

**Rachel Mabala,** Former Photojournalist, Daily Monitor/ Photography consultant in Europe

There are people in this world we meet, who make things better wherever they go. They make you laugh a little louder, smile a little bigger and help you live a little better. You gave me that JDk. Thank you for being awesome to work with and now I call you friend.



Catherine (Cathy) Ageno, who represented the broadcast section, presents a gift from her colleagues to Mr Kalinaki.

# lauds Daniel Kalinaki's service



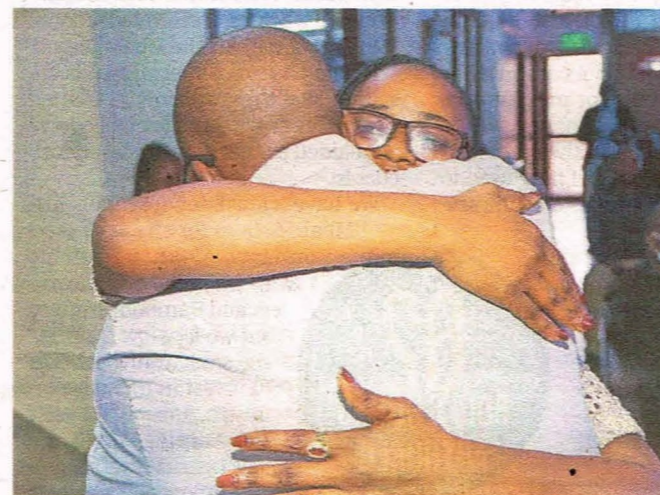
Ms Nsibirwa hugs Kalinaki during the farewell ceremony.



Mr Kalinaki and NMG-Uganda staff cut cake as a signature of cherished memories they have spent together.



Mr Kalinaki chairs a meeting with NMG-Uganda editors during his final working day. The afternoon meeting is a routine culture in many newsrooms to determine the stories that will run in the next edition of the paper.



Ms Aidah Nalubega, the office manager in the Editorial department at NMG, comforts Mr Kalinaki.



Mr Kalinaki addresses his colleagues at the Daily Monitor newsroom.



Mr Kalinaki edits the Daily Monitor for the last time. Looking on are Mr Chekwech and creative editors Muhammed Tamale (2nd right) and Michael Louboyera Musaasizi.